

The LongPath

A North Alabama DX Club Publication

Special points of interest:

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- June Program
- May Meeting Minutes
- DX Contests
- Treasurer's Update
- Heard Island News
- Recollections of Dayton
- The P5
- Summer Plans at AG4W

How to Join

- * Come to a club meeting;
- * or send in an application by mail (form on www.NADXC.org)
- * or call Tom Duncan at (256)705-2147

From the President

By Mark Brown, N4BCD

Fingers tapping the keys but not many words come out. Maybe I used most of them up writing the "Recollection of Dayton" article further in.

I have to say that I'm grateful that this Spring's round of over the top rare DXpeditions is complete. The home remodeling project that never ends, Dayton, Field Day, Hamfest, and other family matters have conspired to keep the rig on standby for too many days.

We do indeed have an exciting summer though. Field Day is a few short weeks away and as Chairman for K4BFT's effort at the US Space & Rocket Center, I encourage you all to come out and support the local club. Then in August we have our Hamfest, not the biggest but certainly friendliest. Our Hamfest Director Charlie N4OKL was seen in Dayton rounding up more surprises for us.

Don't forget to get your NADXC DX Dinner tickets soon. Kelley will be at the next meeting to take cash or checks or the nadxc.org website can accept your credit card transaction.

Starting to look at the calendar too for this Fall's DX season. As we ride the downhill slope of a dismal Cycle 24 it's clear that we're going to need low band antennas. That 10# spool of enameled wire for the 80m radial field is not going to lay itself and working backwards from September I need to get busy on that too.

73,

Mark N4BCD

North Alabama DX Club - President

Dayton Wrap-Up

June Program by NADXC's Dayton Attendees

The NADXC was well represented at this year's Dayton Hamvention, so much so that the attendees will regale those of us who didn't get to go with tales of adventure including heroic conquest of the flea market, hard bargaining sessions with hapless booth attendants, wild parties at the Crowne Plaza, and...well, I really shouldn't give it all away! But to whet your appetite just a bit more, read Mark's article on pages 4 and 5.

To be part of the Dayton Wrap-Up, get to the Golden Corral next Tuesday, June 14th around 6:00 pm for dinner, 7:00 for the business meeting, with the program to begin no later than 7:30.

You may be sure the stories you will hear will be well worth the price of admission!



Announcements

Mark N4BCD opened the meeting using the new NADXC official gavel with 19 members attending. A query of members going to Dayton showed about a 25% response. Mark mentioned that the Tennessee Contest group had 2 seats available at their table for 12 at the Dayton Contest Dinner.

Steve AG4W spoke of his new challenge – DXCC via 2m EME. He plans to be operational sometime this summer. Read Steve's article on p. 6 for the inside story.

Tim AB4B plugged the Alabama QSO party coming up on Saturday, June 4 and the need for additional rovers. He mentioned ACG was in the running for a three-peat of winning the club participation award in the New England QSO Party.

Tim and Steve also talked about our move into the E-Skip season with sporadic openings on 6m.

Tim and others noted much improved audio performance on the W4QB repeater. It's unknown exactly what was done to address the issue.

Kelley's emailed Treasury report as follows was read by Mark to the group:

"We have had no new membership applications this month.

I did update the DXCC Standings on the site.

Current bank balance:

\$4698.34

Changes since last month:

\$15.04 new member payment (PayPal)

-\$100.00 to the FT4JA Juan de Nova DXpedition"

Old Business

Mark noted a second email was sent to the attorney inquiring on next steps for Incorporation.

New Business

The text of the NADXC web page was reviewed and corrections made by voice consensus.

NADXC members can be found on the W4QB repeater. 147.30/147.90 MHz (pl. 103.5)

The club thanks the North Alabama Repeater (NARA) for maintaining this.

There is a backup machine W4VM on 147.10/147.70 MHz

Mark thanked M.D. WA4DXP for bringing to our attention that the paragraph describing the packet cluster should be removed.

Mark presented the following rolling history of DXpedition requests and grants:

Current CY 2016 Funding requests

EP2A Iran (Clublog #54) 15APR2016 - 25APR2016. Operators: YL2GM (team leader), YL3CW, YL2KA, UT7UJ, US7UX, UT7UV, UXOLL, EP3MIR, EP2LMA. Request received March 29, 2016

D66D Comoros (Clublog #89) in mid-September 2016 through early-October. Operators: OK6DJ, OK1FPS and OK1FCJ. Request received April 29, 2016

H44GC & H40GC DXpedition 2016, DXpedition to Solomon Isl. (Clublog #87) and Temotu Province (Clublog : #39). Request by: Stan, LZ1GC / also **T2GC, C21GC, 3D2GC - FIJI & 3D2GC/P ROTUMA ISL.** Request received May 2, 2016

CY2015 funding:

- \$125 each to **Willis Island VK9WA** Nov 2015
- \$125 to **Palmyra Island K5P** Jan 2016
- \$200 to **South Sandwich VP8STI and South Georgia VP8SGI** Jan/Feb 2016
- \$200 to **Heard Island VKOEK** Mar/Apr 2016

CY2016 funding: (\$400 budgeted)

- \$100 to **Juan de Nova FT4JA** March/April 2016

Program:

Tonight's program featured Warren KJ4RAQ describing his modeling and construction of 2 crossed half-squares for 20m DX.

NADXC Officers and Directors

President	Mark Brown, N4BCD
Vice President	Jim Spikes, N4KH
Secretary/	Kelley Vann-Johns, W4VPZ
Treasurer	
At-large	Kevin Hibbs, KG4TEI
Directors	Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

DX Contests for June

By Chuck Lewis, N4NM

GACW WWSA CW DX Contest, (CW), 80-160 meters

June 11, 1500Z to June 12, 1500Z

Exchange: RST, CQ zone

See page 86, June QST and www.wwsatest.org

Asia-Pacific Sprint, (SSB), 20-15 meters

June 11, 1100Z to June 11, 1300Z

Exchange: RS, Serial #

See page 86, June QST and www.jsfc.org/apsprint/aprule.txt

Portugal Day Contest, (SSB/CW), 80-10 meters

June 11, 1200Z to June 12, 1200Z

Exchange: RS(T) and Serial or district code

See page 86, June QST, and http://www.rep.pt/portugal_day_contest/rules.html

All Asian DX Contest (CW), 160-10M

June 18, 0000Z to June 19, 2359Z

Exchange: RST plus age; YLs send 00

See page 86, June QST and www.jarl.or.jp/English

Stew Perry Topband Challenge (CW), 160 meters

June 18, 1500Z to June 19, 1500Z

Exchange: 4-character grid square

See page 86, June QST and <http://www.kkn.net/stew/>

IARU HF World Championships (SSB/CW), 160-10M

July 9, 1200Z to July 10, 1200Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus ITU zone; IARU HQ stns send HQ abbrev.

See <http://www.arri.org/iaru-hf-championship>

OTHERS:

Ukrainian DX Classic RTTY Contest,
1200Z, Jun 18 to 1159Z, Jun 19

His Maj. King of Spain Contest, SSB,
1200Z, Jun 25 to 1200Z, Jun 26

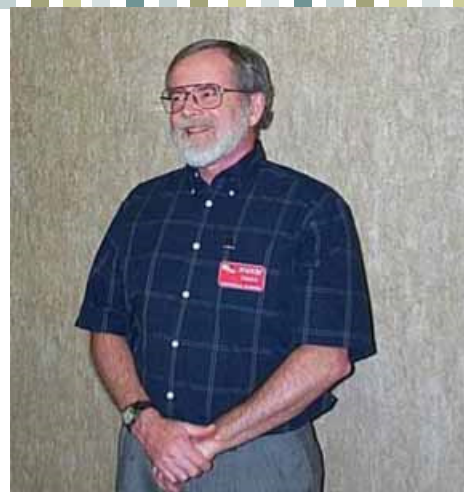
Marconi Memorial HF Contest (CW),
1400Z July 2 – 1400Z, July 3

Ukrainian DX DIGI Contest,
1200Z Jun 25 to 1200Z Jun 26

DON'T FORGET: Alabama QSO Party,
1600Z June 4 – 0400Z, June 6

Dates & times often change or are misprinted in the journals; beware.

Chuck, N4NM



Treasurers's Update

By Kelley Johns, W4VPZ

Since the May minutes we have the following treasury update:

Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance: \$ 4,698.34

Deposit: \$ 159.00 (3 membership payments, 3 banquet tickets*)

Ending Balance: \$ 4,857.34

*Banquet tickets are beginning to sell. Don't wait until it's too late to get yours. You do not want to miss it — great food, great friendships, and a great program.

Heard Island News

By Kelley Johns, W4VPZ

The VKOEK Heard Island DXpedition to which NADXC contributed has made its April newsletter available at http://www.heardisland.org/HD_pages/HD_newsletter_back_issues.html along with the already-published issues dating back to June of last year. Check out some stunning photographs and interesting facts.

The LongPath Staff

Publisher/Editor:

Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

Departments:

Chuck Lewis, N4NM, DX Contests

Kelley Vann-Johns, W4VPZ, Minutes

Mark Brown, N4BCD, From the President

Recollections of Dayton

By Mark Brown, N4BCD

When your officers and directors chose “Recollections of Dayton” as the June meeting topic I started jotting down notes so as not to forget anything. It morphed into this article. As many readers know, I accepted an invitation from Gigaparts to again be part of their sales team pitching the Apache Labs line of ANAN radios.

Arrived around 3PM Thursday to the Arena to deliver the borrowed ANAN 100D radio and met Emmet Hoehensee of RadioWavz just outside the door setting up a huge Spiderbeam that covered 40m through 6m on a US Tower. Chatted with him for a few minutes about his monster antenna and their station plans for activating special event call W8D with contest grade equipment.



Above: W8D's Spiderbeam

Below: The W8D shack



Met up with the Gigaparts guys and asked if they needed any help. None required so browsed the flea market and vendor areas for a few hours and on the way back to the car sat down at W8D to operate the IC-7851 connected to an OMPower's new 4000 watt amp and the big spiderbeam. The Array Solutions wattmeter indicated well in excess of legal limit so I backed off the mic gain to make a few Q's before heading downtown to the Crowne Plaza.

Dayton streets are tough on my little car with tight suspension. Checked in and unpacked, then found the upstairs restaurant and was invited to join a table of three hams from Seattle. Great meal and conversation. Turns out they were staying at one of those Airbnb offerings, a 3200 square foot home for cheap.

Friday we were in the booth by 8 AM and already had visitors asking questions as we turned on the radios to playback pre-recorded spectrum made the week prior at home. It was non-stop all day and I broke away about a half hour early to get back to the hotel for the Top Band Dinner.

Not sure what was the most disappointing – cold rubber chicken, a lackluster program, or the total lack of door prizes. It was good though to be off my

feet for a few hours.

Saturday was a repeat of Friday and during the afternoon while pitching to three hams I spotted Rob Sherwood NCOB passing in the aisle behind them. I abruptly excused myself to greet him and asked if he'd join us for a few minutes. For about 10 minutes, these three hams and a growing crowd listened to Rob confirm what I'd been saying about the radio and add his own take from ownership of the 200D model. A real treat and Rob [below] mentioned too that he was not planning to be at the Contest Dinner, rather he dinner plans with ARRL Lab Director Bob Allison.



The Contest Dinner was a sold-out affair – 500 tickets with only a few empty seats seen. This dinner had all the hallmarks of greatness. A good meal, fabulous MC, interesting speakers, and over \$10K in door prizes. I won a gift certificate for \$50 to United Micro Systems and all Tim K3LR said when he handed it to me is that “you’ll love it”.

A bit more about the Crowne Plaza hotel downtown. While it was full of notable and recognizable hams, that hotel needs renovation about as much as Hara Arena. The top floor restaurant is fine indeed, but the rooms and facility overall need attention. Getting from the ground floor to my eighth floor room the elevator felt like it was hitting speed bumps between floors. The lid

(cont'd from p. 3)

to the in-room coffeemaker was broken. It nearly took a wrench to turn on the tight shower faucet. Never could get the clock radio alarm programmed. There were so many coats of paint on the bathroom door that it had a 3D texture. Parking when there's another event in the adjacent convention center is by valet only – a \$15 adder. I've spent less and gotten way more than this place offers so next year I'm in the hunt for somewhere else.

On Sunday morning the crowds were thinner but there was a steady stream of new and returning hams asking more questions about the radio. Suddenly there's Bob Allison in his white

lab coat asking to see the diversity reception capabilities of the radio. When I showed him the pop-up screen where magnitude & phase between two antennas could be easily adjusted, he broke out in a wide grin and said something to the effect “That’s really cool. Maybe in a few years we’ll be able to do the same thing on transmit.”

It was notable that at least three returning visitors on Sunday were there to buy a radio, one of them having heard Sherwood talk about it the day before. Also notable was a sort of “customer acceptance” of SDR radios, I’m guessing due to the overwhelming popularity of Icom’s new 7300.

Robbie Sperr had asked me to ferry one of the other sales guys to the Dayton Airport so we left the Arena at 11:30AM and were at the departure terminal at noon. Along the way I learned that Dayton has some upscale homes with gates & manicured lawns, a far cry from block after block of unkempt old places between the Arena and downtown.

Perhaps the light traffic on the trip home was due to being one week away from Memorial Day. With two meal stops and a gas stop I was home by 6:30 CST, both exhilarated and exhausted from a memorable weekend.

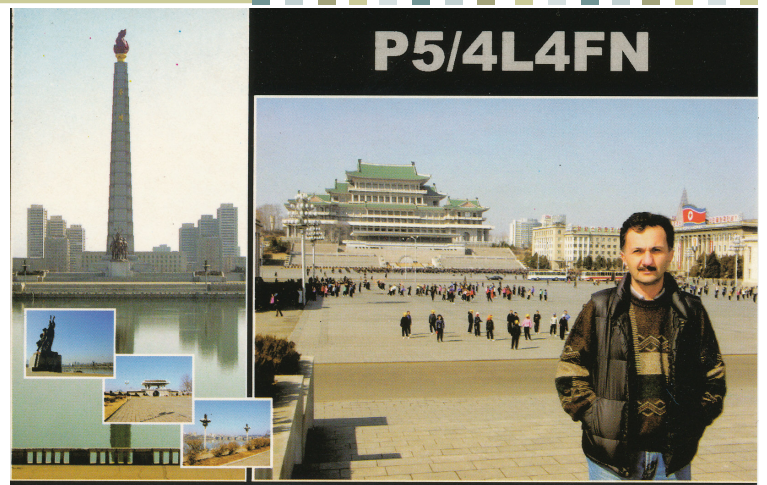
The P5

By John Stensby, N5DF

Georgian Ed Giorgadze, P5/4L4FN, operate from DPRK for nearly a year, on and off in his spare time. (Ed worked for the UN World Food Organization.) Nearly all of his part-time operation was on 10mtrs SSB. Usually, in North Alabama, his signal was weak, just above the noise. But, several local Deserving managed to log the elusive contact.

One bright sunny morning, there he was, spotted on the cluster and heard weakly on 10 mtrs. I quickly spun my X7 towards P5 and tuned my Henry amp, my excitement level rising quickly. With all that could be mustered given the early morning hour, I jumped into the pile up. Up the band, calling the P5, I could hear many stations, including my cross-the-street neighbor Tim, N8DEU, with his 5 element Long John (at roof level) and 25 watts from a converted CB rig (!!)

Persistence paid off! The contact was made! P5, The Rare One, was in the log!

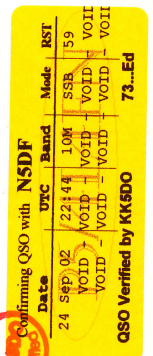


Upon my arrival in the DPR Korea in December 1998, I did not realize that I would be activating the most sought after DXCC country one day.

It has been a long march to make my life-time dream come true and to make the DPR Korea a part of this great world DX community of ours. I am grateful to the dedicated supporters of KK5DO, OH2BH, W3UR and W5IZ for assisting me at various times in my adventure.

It was their support and knowledge that guided me so that the accredited P5414FN cards would make their way to you today. But most of all, I would like to present my greatest gratitude to my wife-Marine and my daughter Ann who have lived through Dad's "strange hobby" back home in Georgia, as well to all my friends in DPR Korea who have made our desires possible. With this wonderful experience, I am now extending my stay here until June 2003, securing that P5 will be logged for all those who Deserve.

I would like to thank the following for their kind help: EA7JX, K5GNA, K5OE, PA8AA, WZ8P, Personal Database Applications, Inc., Bencher, Inc., NCDXF, INDEXA and all hams worldwide.



10-X# 72722
Grid PM38

Summer Plans at AG4W

By Steve Werner, AG4W

I have written before about planning for the next DX and contest season during the summer and setting some goals before the trip to the Dayton Hamvention. This gives some focus to the Dayton trip and some hard to find items can be purchased. The previous 7 years I have made some significant improvements to the station and antennas to improve performance, reliability and ease of use of the station. Each year I have made good use of the new improvements which drove me to higher DXCC Challenge and country counts and better contest scores.

After hitting the Honor Roll and DXCC Challenge 2500 I decided to take a different direction this year. I have participated in nearly every aspect of ham radio over the last 50 years. Some have been more exciting than others. Most I tried first on the cheap to see if I had a lot of interest. Some cheap starts like my satellite station turned into a significant effort and cost. This year I am starting on the final frontier, moonbounce. I am going to start on the cheap and let the other guy do the heavy lifting. I plan to use repurposed and reconfigured 2 meter satellite antennas for moonbounce along with a used 150 watt amplifier and JT-65. I am going to take one 10 element cross yagi and make it into 2 yagis with at least 17dB of gain combined. It has been about 15 years since I have used the satellite equipment. I enjoyed using the high orbit satellites like AO-10, AO-13, and AO-40. It has been well over 10 years since one of those has been operational. The nice part about satellite or moonbounce antennas is that they don't need to be high off the ground. This will make installation and improvements much easier.

The antennas and rotors have been outside for over 20 years with no recent maintenance. It has been interest-

ing bringing that old rusty gold back to life. The old Alliance Tenna rotors can be used for an elevation rotor. You just have to balance the weight in front of and behind the rotor. I feel like I am doing an episode of American Restoration. The attached picture showed this one cleaned up pretty nice. The only disadvantage of these rotors is they only aim in 10 degree increments. This is barely adequate for a very high gain antenna. The used Mirage amplifier I bought in Dayton also had a GaAs FET preamp that needs work. The attached picture shows that all the components are easy to get at. Unfortunately the schematics are not accurate. Most recommend putting the amplifier and preamp right at the antenna. That would involve a number of problems related to keeping it cool and dry and providing significant power at the antenna.

My goal is to have the system working in time for the ARRL EME Contests Oct 22 -23 and Nov 19-20. I have found working E skip DX on 6 meters very challenging. Last summer we had a nice opening into central Europe. I expect the DX on 2M moonbounce to set the bar even higher. Now I will have to deal with Faraday Rotation, Spatial Polarity, Libration Fading, Sky Noise and Doppler. Even working someone one state away the path has 250 dB of loss covering nearly 478,000 miles. Now that is DX. That will make each DX contact that much more exciting. It is amazing to see the interest in Europe in moonbounce and the investment that has been made in their stations.

I encourage everyone to try something new this summer. In many cases the costs to get started are not nearly as high as you think. Years ago it was far more expensive to get started on RTTY or slow scan TV. If you have not worked DX in those modes you should try them out. I expect my total addition-

al cost to make my first moonbounce contact will be less than \$300. I have been very pleased at how helpful current moonbounce stations are at providing help and advice. I found the same thing happened on other aspects of amateur radio. The key is to just ask. Most are anxious to attract new blood into their facet of the hobby.

Steve AG4W

